



Yukon College Student Exit Survey

2018-19

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Survey Design, Purpose and Context

The *Yukon College Exit Survey* collects information from former students about their satisfaction with their college experience. This includes student success in making transitions from Yukon College to the labour market and/or to further educational pursuits. The survey has been conducted annually since 2001, providing 19 years of data. The survey conducted approximately nine to eleven months after the completion of the respondents' Yukon College studies. This year's surveys were conducted during February and March of 2020.

Formerly, the survey was conducted primarily by telephone, with a web completion option. Beginning last year, web administration has become the primary mode of data collection. Emails were sent to all eligible participants using their personal email address on file. A reminder email was sent to those who had not responded by the beginning of the final week of the survey.

This year's survey administration was impacted by COVID-19 and physical distancing measures. The initial survey invitation was sent on February 18th, with a reminder email sent on March 16th. Later that same day, physical distancing measures were announced for the Yukon Territory. The survey closed on Friday, March 20th. No further reminder emails were sent, and no attempt was made to follow up with non-respondents by telephone (as had been done the previous year). Any survey responses collected during the COVID-19 pandemic could be expected to be strongly influenced by current conditions, including job losses, uncertainty about educational delivery, and general concerns affecting respondents' ability to reflect on their previous year's experiences. As the bulk of responses were collected before any pandemic response was initiated in the Yukon, this should not be a major factor in interpreting the data.

As the survey was conducted prior to the transition from Yukon College to Yukon University, and as all respondents had graduated from Yukon College, the institution is referred to as "Yukon College" throughout this report.

The target population for the 2018-19 survey consists of all students who:

- graduated from a Yukon College certificate, diploma, or degree program in 2018-19, or
- completed at least 24 credits at Yukon College between 2017-18 and 2018-19, or
- completed at least 3 College Access Pathways courses in 2018-19, and
- had not been enrolled in more than one Yukon College credit course (3 credit hours) in 2019-20.

The rationale for including former students enrolled in one credit course in 2019-20 is to acknowledge “lifelong learning,” while recognizing that these students will have already completed a large part of their education based on the above criteria.

This year’s survey had an overall response rate of 25%. years’ surveys have had response rates ranging from 16%-50%.

Response to Yukon College Exit Survey 2018-19

	Number	Percent
Completed surveys	59	25%
No response	180	75%
<i>Total Eligible Participants</i>	239	
Bounced or missing email addresses	6	2%
<i>Total Target Population</i>	245	

Results

The *Yukon College Exit Survey* covers a variety of topics including: program completion, upgrading, further education, employment, volunteer work, funding for education, satisfaction with the Yukon College experience, and demographic details. The survey is primarily quantitative but does include space for some qualitative remarks. Illustrative comments are used in this report to add context¹ but may not be representative of all respondents. This report presents highlights of the main results of the survey. Additional details may be available upon request from Institutional Research and Planning.

Participation in Academic Upgrading

Respondents were asked if they had taken academic upgrading courses at Yukon College. More than one-quarter (29%) had done so, including 10% who were in the College Access Pathways program in 2018-19, and 19% who had taken upgrading courses prior to taking another post-secondary program at Yukon College, or concurrently with another program.

"While at Yukon College, did you take any upgrading courses, such as College Access Pathways or Adult Basic Education?"

SOURCE: *Yukon College Exit Survey 2018-19*

	Number	Percent
Yes, most recent program was upgrading	6	10%
Yes, prior to or concurrent with another program	11	19%
No	39	66%
Don't know	3	5%
TOTAL:	59	100%

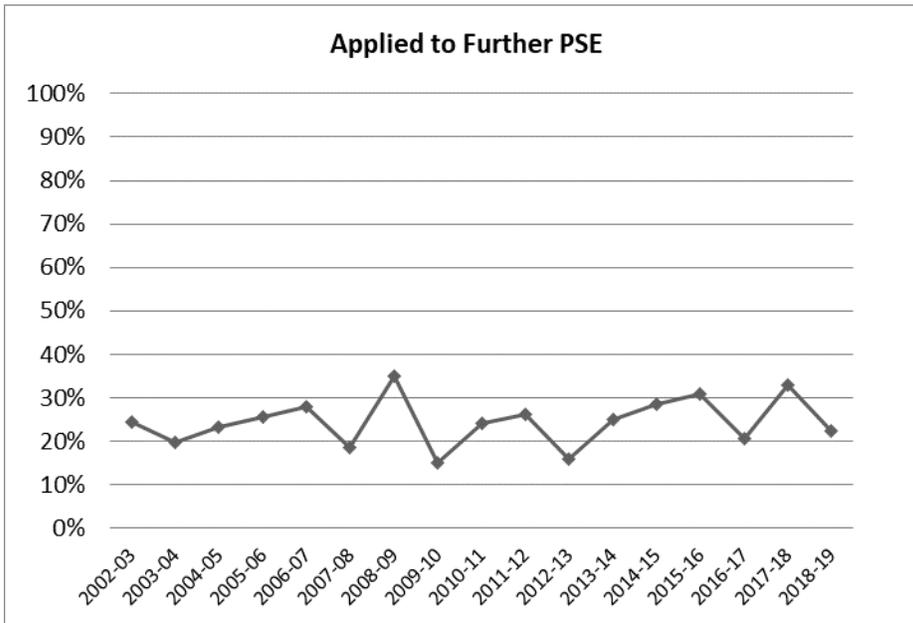
All eleven students who had taken a post-secondary program after or concurrently with upgrading said that their upgrading courses were helpful, including 82% who said they were "very helpful" and 18% who said "somewhat helpful."

"I left high school with grade 7 math and grade 10 English. Upgrading gave me the confidence to pursue further education."

¹ Illustrative comments have been placed in the report where they fit with the topic, rather than being grouped by question.

Transfer and Participation in Further Education

About one out of five alumni (22%) said that they had applied to another post-secondary institution since going to Yukon College. This figure has ranged from 15%-35% in prior years. The proportion applying to further education was higher among alumni of university transfer programs, at 36%.



Out of the 13 survey respondents who had applied to another post-secondary institution, 92% had been accepted and the other 8% (one person) was still waiting to hear back. Out of the 12 who had been accepted, ten people (or 83%) had enrolled.

Among those 10 who had enrolled, eight (or 80%) said that they had expected to receive transfer credit. Seven of them (or 88%) received all of the transfer credit that they expected. This reverses a downward trend and brings numbers back up into more favorable ranges.

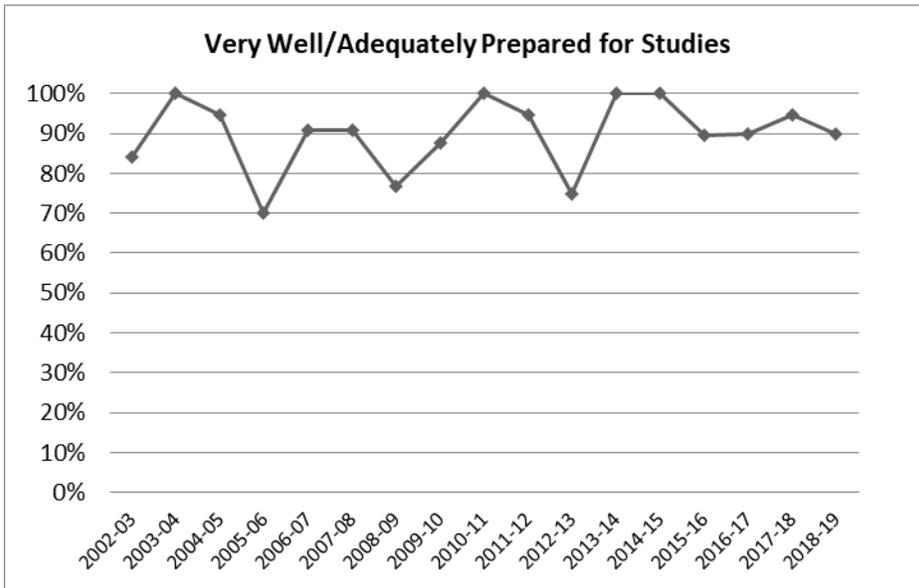


All of the eight alumni who expected to receive transfer credit said that they were satisfied with their transfer experience, including the student who did not receive all the credit they expected.

"It wasn't Yukon College that was dissatisfying in the transfer process."



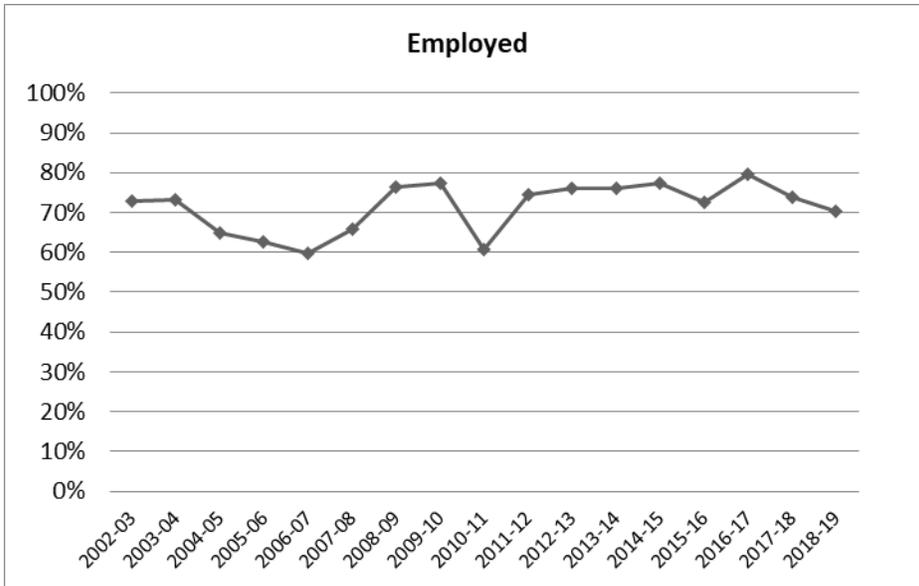
The ten alumni who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution were asked how well their studies at Yukon College prepared them for their studies at the new institution. Nine out of the ten (90%) said that they were “very well” (50%) or “adequately” (40%) prepared. The remaining individual (10%) reported feeling “not at all” prepared.



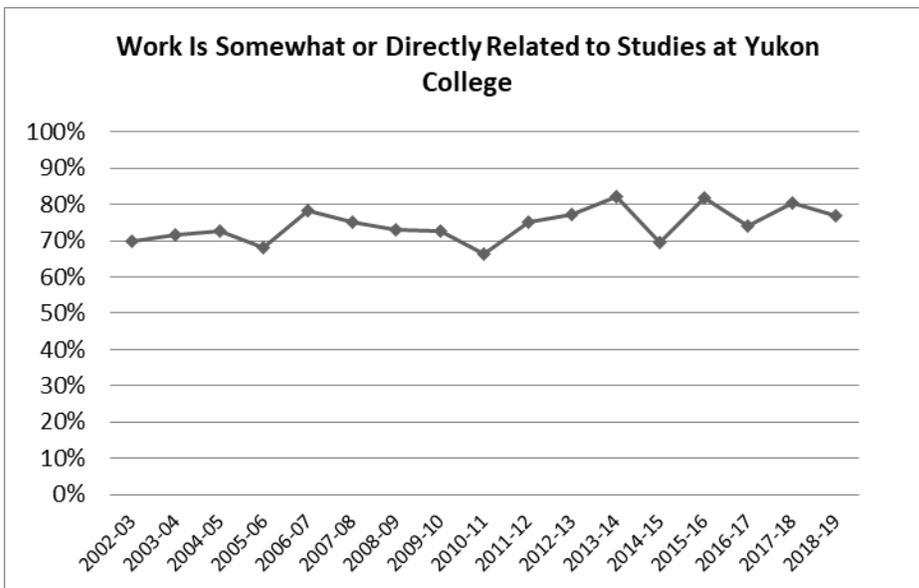
Employment

Seven out of ten respondents (70%) were working at a paid job or business at the time of the survey. This is down a bit from recent years, but not outside of historical ranges. Alumni of pre-apprenticeship trades and career certificates and diplomas had a higher rate of employment, at 77%.

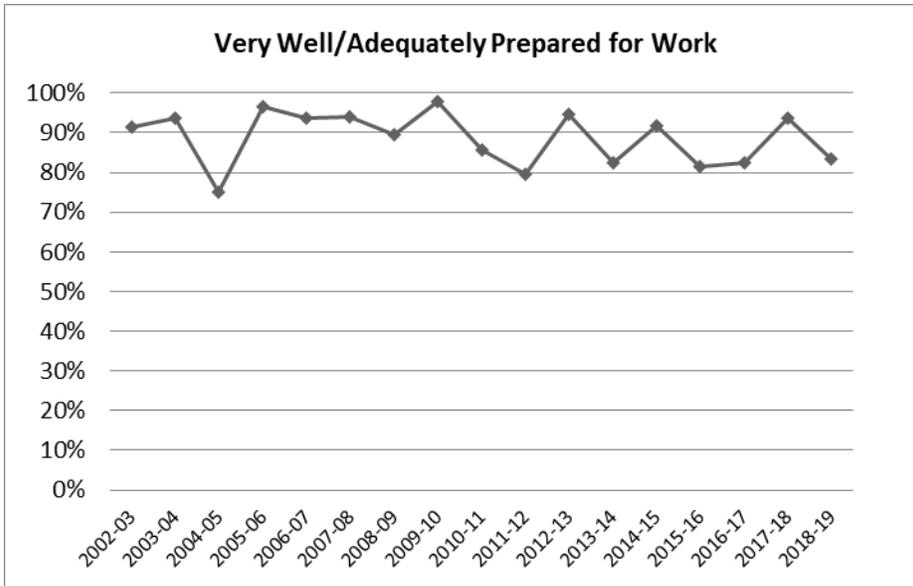
Among those who were employed, 74% worked 35 or more hours per week at their main job or business, and 59% had permanent, year-round employment (as opposed to temporary, casual/on-call, or seasonal work). Close to one-third (31%) had more than one job or business. The main job or business of 8% of respondents was self-employment.



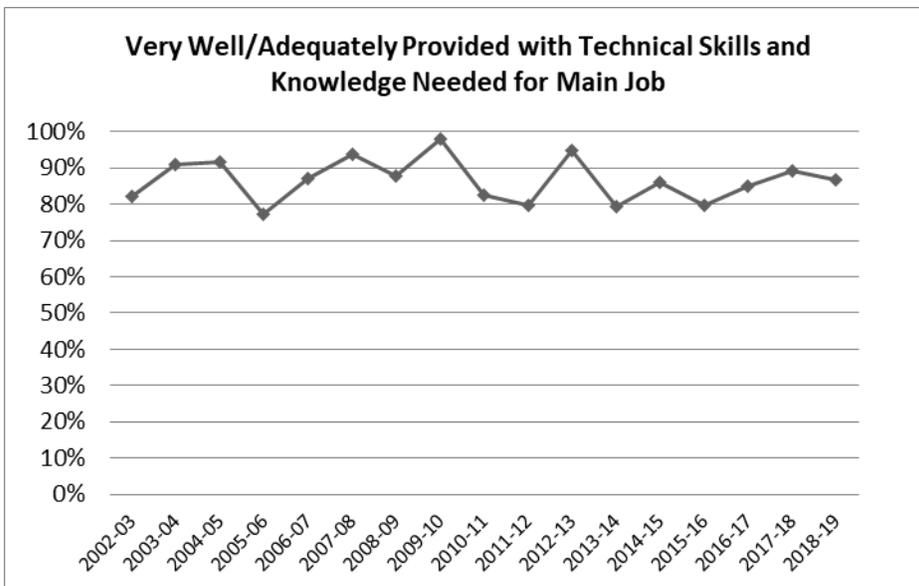
More than three-quarters of employed respondents (77%) said that their work was “somewhat” or “directly” related to their field of study at Yukon College. This is about average for recent years.



Respondents whose work is somewhat or directly related to their Yukon College studies were asked how well their studies had prepared them for work. More than four out of five (83%) were “very well prepared” or “adequately prepared.” This leaves 17% who were only “somewhat prepared” or “not at all prepared.”



These same respondents were asked how well the training and education they received at Yukon College provided them with the technical skills and knowledge they needed for their main job. In this regard, 87% were “very well prepared” or “adequately prepared.”



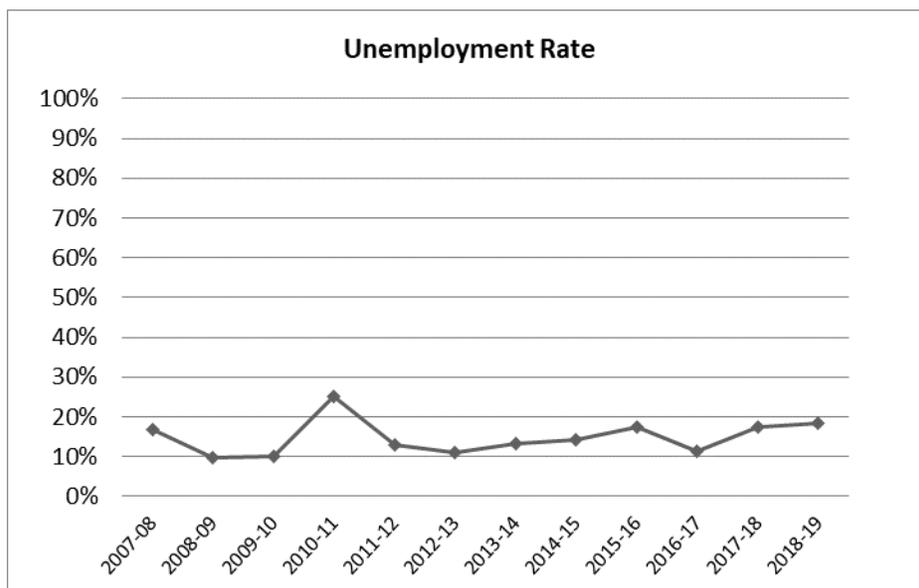
Unemployment

Three out of seven respondents (30%) said that they were not working at the time of the survey. The main reason why respondents were not working is because they could not find work (29%). Another 24% each were attending school or training, or on seasonal layoff. Personal and family responsibilities kept 18% out of employment, while 6% had other reasons.

“Geographic Isolation. I lived in [a rural Yukon community] I sent my resume to all local business's that were advertising and did not receive any calls despite having a very strong resume and relevant experience. ... As housing availability is increasingly sparse and costly and there was no employment available I had no option but to relocate [outside the territory].... The options available here for my family are much more promising and I aim to further my education. ...”

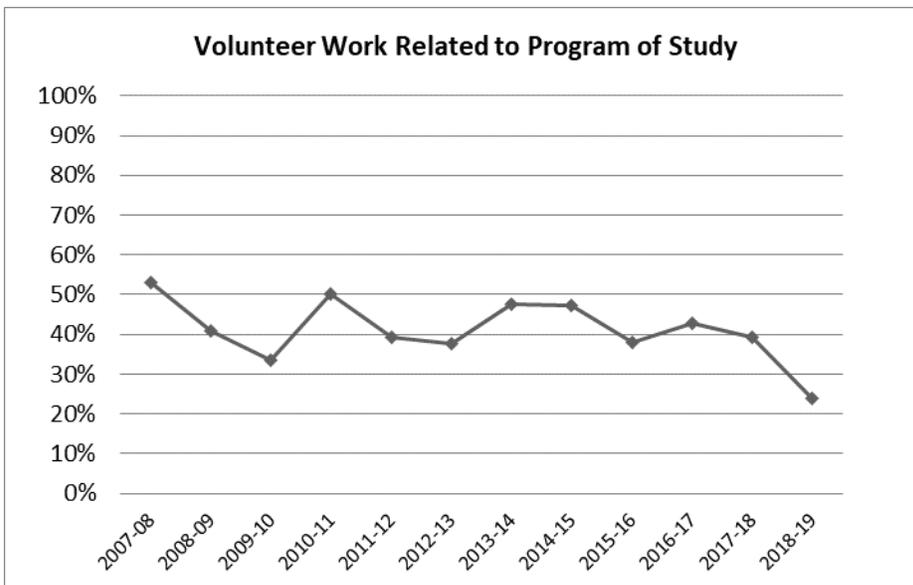
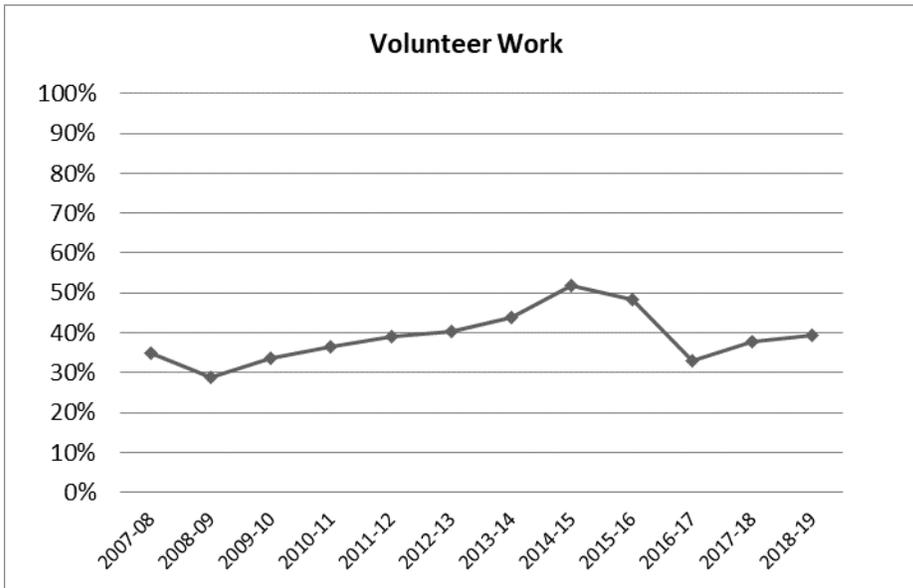
In determining an unemployment rate, it is a standard practice to exclude individuals who are unable to work or who are not currently interested in working, e.g. because they are engaged in non-market activities such as education or caregiving. Survey respondents who were not working were asked whether they had done anything to look for work in the last four weeks, and those who answered “yes” are considered part of the labour force along with those who were actually employed.

Using this definition, 86% of respondents were in the labour force (working, or looking for work). The unemployment rate was 18% (not working, but looking). While this may seem high compared with the Yukon’s overall unemployment rate (3.2% in March 2020), it is similar to that observed on previous years of the survey.



Volunteer Work

Two out of five respondents (39%) do volunteer work. One-quarter of those who volunteer (24%) said that their volunteer work is related to their field of study. While the rate of volunteerism is similar to previous years, the proportion that is related to volunteers' studies is lower than usual.



Satisfaction with Yukon College

More than nine out of ten respondents gave good or excellent ratings to the quality of instruction (91%) and the courses that they took at Yukon College (96%). These figures are within historical ranges.

"Had a great experience with instructors and courses"

"Loved my program due to the small class size, learned easily from teachers and classmates. Good opportunity to really learn everything thoroughly, ask questions and keep up with homeworks."

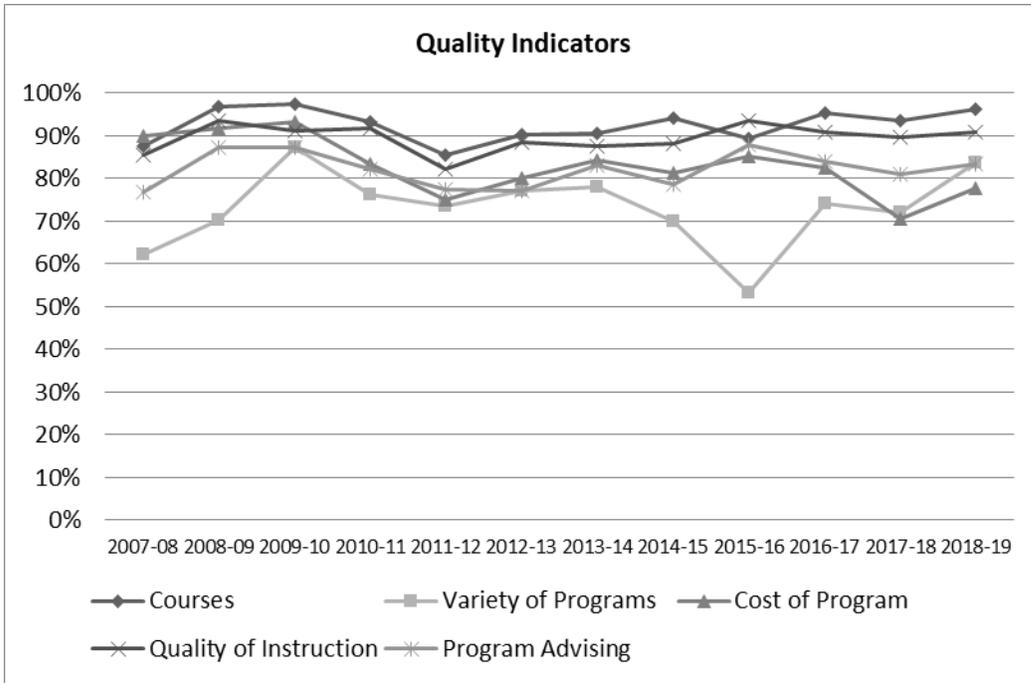
"Some instructors were terrible and made for poor experiences but others were phenomenal and made up for the other classes."

"Loved my experience here, meet amazing people, had a good experience with the professors, and the classes were tailored to what I needed and asked for"

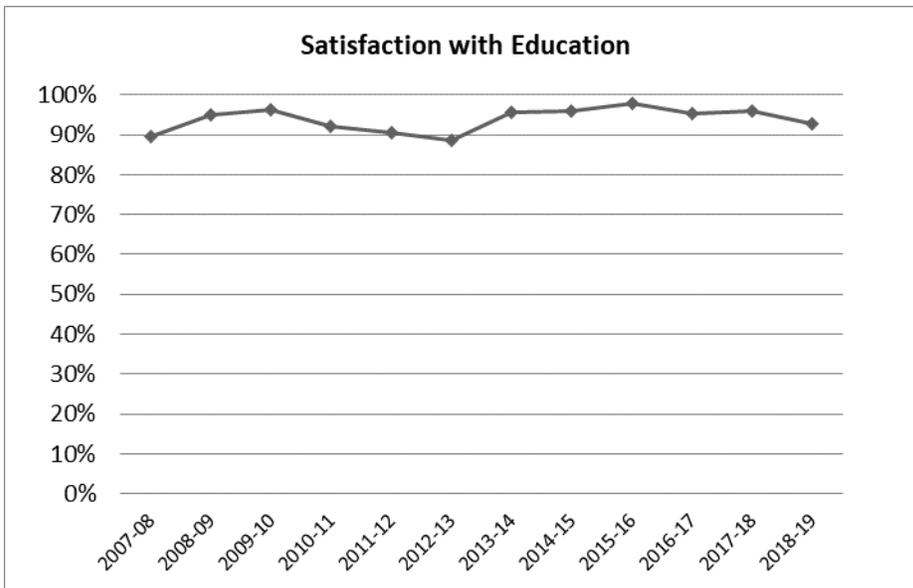
More than four out of five respondents gave good or excellent ratings to the variety of programs offered at Yukon College (84%) and to program advising (83%). In their written comments, however, a couple of students said that they had not met with a program advisor, or had navigated this largely on their own. Satisfaction with the variety of programs is at its highest level since 2008-09.

More than three-quarters of respondents (78%) gave good or excellent ratings to the cost of their program, which is within historical ranges.

"I would recommend to others to study at Yukon college. However, the prices for education and supplies such as textbooks are extremely high"

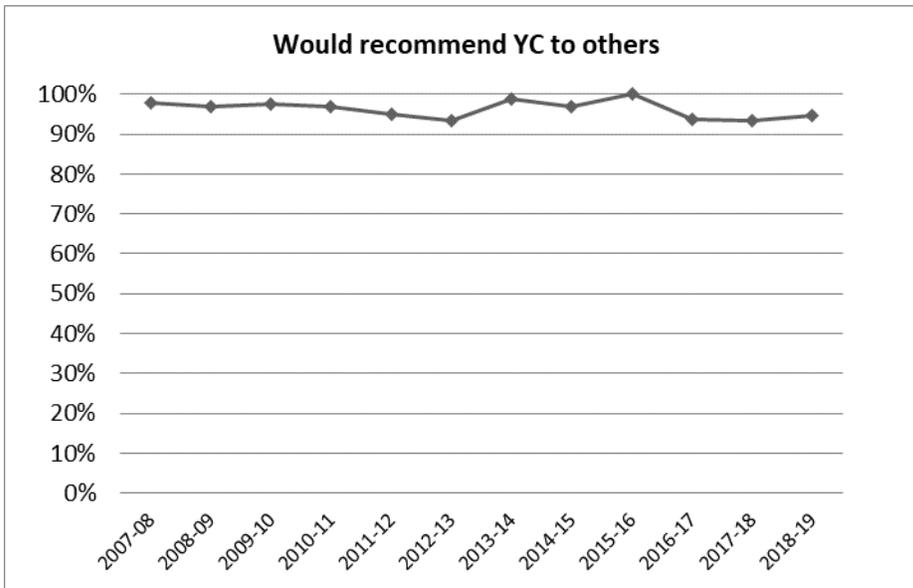


More than nine out of ten respondents (93%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the education they received at Yukon College. This is within historical ranges.



"Thank you Yukon College for the experience, struggle and memories."

In addition, 95% would recommend Yukon College to others as a place to study. This is also within historical ranges.



"Distance learning opportunities for community students is such a valuable opportunity that many of us previously did not have. Thank You!"

"Great place to be a mature student"

"I first went to Yukon College trying to get a GED, I ended up leaving with a diploma. I think that's the most important thing the college has to offer. The ability for anybody no matter there education level to start learning."

"Loved my experience here, meet amazing people, had a good experience with the professors, and the classes were tailored to what I needed and asked for."

"If You Could Change One Thing"

Survey respondents were asked, "If you could change one thing about your experience at Yukon College, what would that be?" They answered in their own words, and their responses have been analyzed for themes. Some common threads include: to participate more in student life, for technology issues to be addressed, to have consistently high quality of instruction across all courses, and to have more courses available and for courses to be offered more frequently.

The following comments pertain to a desire to have engaged more strongly with student life activities:

"Get involved in school clubs - if there were any sports relate groups."

"Do more social activities!"

"If I could have that opportunity, I would try to get more information about social activity or cultural events. That is because I missed some events which I would have had interest without notice."

"More participation in the College community"

"More variety of events and more frequent, not just events involving the campus (which were awesome but would be nice to include other college students)"

A few alumni mentioned on the survey that they experienced technology issues that were not adequately addressed:

"fix computer and network issues, extremely frustrating for students and instructors"

"To have teachers that are more familiar with zoom or technical staff available to fix asap. There were many issues zoom which lead to a lack of time to learn."

"A lot of IT troubles there. Upgrades to hardware and internet were made, but it seems like a management issue more than a hardware and internet connection issue. I wish there would be more stable internet, IT staff with more of an entrepreneurial and innovative approach, less governmental, and no more paper in the admissions process. Make the entire admissions digital."

Some alumni did not experience excellence in teaching from all of their instructors:

"There are few instructor who's lecture were not that helpful for students. they should work on the methodology and instruction."

"Consistency in teaching"

"[One] ... instructor ... was horrible, and I graduated without learning anything at all about [the subject matter] ... :(YC needs a better [subject matter] ... teacher.... [these subjects] ... are so important!"

The following comments express a wish for more courses to be available, or for courses to be offered more frequently:

"Offer more and longer trade programs"

"More frequent offerings of some courses to accommodate students who start mid year and therefore are unable to meet the requirements if the course is only offered every 2 years."

"More options for courses in field of study/more semesters these courses offered"

A few students would have taken a different program or courses:

"I would take program advisor more seriously and study what I think I like. Little regret of what the program advisor told me to take and I end up disliking it but still have to finish it."

"I would have taken a different program"

"Not to have to take statistics"

The remaining comments did not fit into the above themes:

"I would've completed my program"

"More inclusion including supporting programs around Whitehorse that students may be interested in (for example: the college Facebook page does not share anything outside of the college). More services for students that are struggling or need help"

"A little bit more time for field work."

"program advisement"

"Maximize the usage of the student academic centwr"

"If an international student arrived late by 2-3 days from the day of orientation then you guys should allow that student to attend the classes if they have a valid reason to be late."

"Career centre"

"Make education free of cost"

"No limit of students in some of the program."

"If I did not get surgery on my knee before coming to Canada, I could have engaged in more outdoor activities and outdoor interpretive course."

"Having the required text books available for purchase or express delivery to the community would have been beneficial."

"Not having to pay for my practicums."

Obstacles and Assistance in Overcoming Them

Survey respondents were asked, "Were there any obstacles you had to overcome to participate in your College program?" Those who answered in the affirmative were asked, "Did the College assist you in any way?"

Twenty-four respondents (41%) reported obstacles. More than half of these students (14 people, or 58% of those with obstacles) said that the College was able to assist them. Five respondents (21%) gave mixed responses or were partially assisted. One person said that the College was not able to help, one person said they did not seek help from the College, and the other three did not comment one way or the other.

Types of obstacles that students had to overcome included:

- Financial needs (3 respondents)
- Personal and family matters (3 respondents)
- Moving and finding housing (3 respondents)
- Balancing work and family life with education (2 respondents)
- Time management (2 respondents)
- Lacking prerequisites and/or requiring upgrading (2 respondents)
- Other challenges relating to academics and learning (6 respondents)
- Other challenges relating to wellness and inclusivity (2 respondents)
- Unspecified (1 respondent)

Conclusion

Yukon College alumni are overwhelmingly satisfied with their education, and would recommend Yukon College to others as a place to study. They give high ratings to the quality of instruction, and to their courses. Satisfaction with the variety of programs offered has also improved.

The College does a good job of preparing students for further education (90% very well or adequately prepared for further studies), and a fairly good job of preparing students for employment in their field (83% very well or adequately prepared). Employment outcomes are modest, with the unemployment rate typically hovering between 10%-20%, even at times of historically low unemployment in the territory. About three-quarters of employed alumni find jobs in their fields.

Two out of five students had to overcome obstacles in order to participate in their program, and the College was able to assist more than half of them. In their written comments throughout the survey, students commented on the wonderful learning experiences they found at the College, but also noted a few isolated instances of lower instructional quality, unresolved issues with technology, and difficulties accessing courses that are offered infrequently. An emerging theme this year was a heightened interest in participating in more social, cultural and sporting events while at school.